



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



MRS. URSULA STEWARD.

HOW A NORTHERN ILLINOIS TOWN SUDDENLY BECAME DRY.

BY A. N. BEEBE, YORKVILLE, ILL.

Between two clear and silvery streams, the Big Rock and the Little Rock, each of which emptied its cool placid waters into Fox River southward, was situated an enterprising little town, in its early history "Plano." Its founders were Cornelius Henning, Marcus Steward and John F. Hollister, the first one being an early pioneer from New York and the latter ones from Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

Plano, so named, was the nucleus for future history and manifold destinies. Born in the cradle of honorable progenitors, it could not consistently lower its aim to reach a higher station. Soon the aid of the surveyor and the officials was invoked and their efforts culminated in an embryo city. The selection of this chosen location was soon proven to be a wise one, as the newcomers sought them out and decided on camping there.

As time wore on, business ventures soon developed. Dwellings were erected, business houses started, churches and school houses were soon underway, and every year some new and desirable feature was added. In 1854, by the ceaseless efforts of these promoters and their progeny, the great thoroughfare, The Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railway was induced to extend its lines from Aurora through Mendota, and later on to Burlington and Quincy. The advent of the railway gave our new town a fresh start and was a potent influence in giving us an outlet for our products and was an inlet to all comers, as well as to shippers of merchandise.

Naturally enough, the citizens of any enterprising town were ready to join hands in the betterment of its people and its institutions, and as the town lots began to sell and

new settlers came in the better element decided that some plan be established by which saloons and grog shops could be kept out, fully realizing, as they did, that an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure; that it would be far more desirable and much easier to prevent an evil of this kind than to eradicate it after once it had gained a foothold. For a time this policy was pursued and lived up to quite tenaciously, but as time wore on the town grew larger and those having to do with the sales and conveyancing of village lots became indifferent and careless, the anti-saloon clause which had been written in all conveyances began being omitted and finally ceased to be a feature in the sale of lots.

It generally happens when an opportunity offers for the sale of the ardent, some one is ready to embrace it; and Plano was no exception. It was in the month of March, 1858, and three saloons were in full blast to dispense liquid inspiration. The Illinois statutes at this time afforded no relief to prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquor, save to incorporated towns. The founders of the town had sought to continue the policy of restriction, but indifference and carelessness had overtaken the vigilant. Temperance societies were organized and all of the isms and fallacies of liquor-sellers' logic had been ground out and threshed out time and time again, and all to no purpose. The saloons still flourished and no license to pay.

The temperance societies were becoming desperate. Mostly women, as they were, they felt deeply chagrined that there seemed to be no remedy in sight, and those people of easy virtue derisively scorned their sincere efforts.

However, there came a time when human endurance ceased to be a virtue and trouble began to brew. Agitation had apparently borne no fruit. This band of so-called "fanatics" had discussed ways and means and probabilities and had pledged their faithfulness to each other. They had twenty-two members. Persuasive measures had utterly failed. On the 23d day of March, 1858, they assembled. Their leaders were Mrs. W. P. Boswell, an



MRS. JANE S. HENNING.



MRS. S. E. HOLLISTER.

eastern lady of high standing, educated and intelligent, resolute and firm, wife of the Railroad Agent; Mrs. Helden-day Beaver, wife of the Baptist minister and a woman of determination; Mrs. Ursula Steward, wife of one of the founders of the Town; Mrs. Cornelia Steward, wife of the late Congressman Hon. Lewis Steward; Mrs. Jane S. Henning, wife of H. B. Henning, merchant in Plano; Mrs. S. E. Hollister, wife of another founder; Mrs. Anna Steward, merchant's wife; Mrs. Marinda Henning, wife of William T. Henning; Mrs. Mary A. Steward, wife of contractor and builder George H. Steward; Mrs. Fanny Tripp, lumber dealer's wife; Mrs. H. O. Doty, contractor's wife; Mrs. Susan Carver, Miss Sarah A. Favor, Mrs. Mary E. Williams, Mrs. Polly Nobles, Mrs. Eunice Clark, Mrs. Sarah E. Henning, Mrs. C. A. Hough, Mrs. Sarah Parsons, Mrs. Deborah Berry, Mrs. Amanda Ryon, Miss Nellie Clark, Miss Hattie Ryon, Mrs. F. L. Sackett, Miss Eunice Swift, Mrs. Esther Kelly, mostly residents of the Town and its suburbs.

The saloon-keepers mingled more or less with the merchants, officials, professional and business men of the Town, and they could hardly be expected to commence open warfare against the grog dealers, and though the latter were debauching the youth and, to a large extent, absorbing the earnings of poor laboring men, yet the business men were slow and reluctant to prosecute.

But these resolute women would no longer tolerate further delay and resolved to try more forcible means. Finally, on the 23d day of March, 1858, they met at their rendezvous and, armed with hatchets, hammers and various other weapons of destruction, marched boldly, but quietly to the leading dealer's place of business, one Stephen Winans'. They found him intrenched at the front door behind a gun and an axe. Parleying a moment, they sought a pledge from him to quit the traffic and were stubbornly refused; whereupon a general smash of barrels, decanters, and bottles ensued. A promiscuous crowd was soon attracted to witness the spilling of the grog. When

the Winans' stock had been despoiled, the woman's brigade visited "Bill Smith." He was a little more demonstrative and tried a plan of bluff, but his assailants were not in the least intimidated by any threat and only indulged in derisive laughter at his discomfiture, and they were not long in inundating his saloon floor with mixed liquors, and poor "Bill" soon became meditative.

The liquor spillers then called at Chambers' saloon; they here met more open objections and, as the women prepared an onslaught on his costly billiard tables, the excitement was at fever heat. Finally, better counsel prevailed and the ladies concluded there would be nothing gained by wanton destruction of property, so the billiard tables were spared. This finished the raid, and there was then not an available drink in town. It had very suddenly become a dry town and there were no beer wagons at large to replenish. Of course the feelings of the thirst vendors were as badly smashed as their barrels and bottles had been and they sought relief in law to retrieve their lost fortunes. Soon the woman's brigade was officially called on by the sheriff and as many of the women as the saloon men considered were financially responsible, were summoned to appear at the next term of the Circuit Court to be holden at Oswego. Some half a dozen of the responsible men were also included and made parties to this suit.

It must be admitted that it was not without some fear when the day approached for them to appear in Court. The anticipation of a trial in Court and the results which might ensue, did not occasion that bouyant spirit that was manifest on the day of the liquor spilling. Nevertheless, they had lost none of their determination to stand together and see it through. When the day came to attend Court, they went together to the county seat; as they were nearing the county seat, they met a delegation of prominent people headed by a brass band who escorted them to the Court house.



MRS. MARY A. STEWARD.



MRS. ANNA STEWARD.

When the case of the Plano women was called by the Court, the presiding Judge very graciously informed them that as no one appeared against them, the suit was dismissed and they were at liberty to go their way. The Oswego citizens then took these Plano liquor spillers to the best hotel, where a dinner was provided. And at their return to their homes, their people gave them a cheering ovation.